

such a stellar background, to ultimately be objected to.

So I will I ask unanimous consent that the Senate consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 815, Monde Muyangwa, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development; that the Senate vote on the nomination without intervening action or debate; that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table; and that any statements related to the nomination be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Reserving the right to object, USAID awarded a \$200 million grant for a 10-year viral emergence early warning project known as PREDICT.

We have uncovered evidence of possible embezzlement, possible money laundering, and insider threats, as well as other concerns related to the PREDICT and other USAID grant awards.

PREDICT was led by a consortium spearheaded by UC Davis and EcoHealth Alliance, which funneled taxpayer dollars to the Wuhan Institute of Virology to conduct risky research on potential pandemic pathogens, including bat coronavirus research.

USAID and NIH both awarded multi-million dollar grants to EcoHealth Alliance during the same 5-year period leading up to and immediately preceding the COVID-19 outbreak.

EcoHealth is unable to produce to NIH proof of its research, such as lab notebooks and virus samples, so we are simply asking USAID for proof of the EcoHealth research they funded. We requested records from USAID that grant recipients are legally required to maintain. Our requests are, indeed, fact-based.

At this point, we believe either the USAID staff is withholding the records from Congress or they have failed to access them through the UC Davis and EcoHealth Alliance. Either option is unacceptable. As such, I object to the unanimous consent motion but look forward to working with the chairman to address these issues.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, through the Chair, would my colleague say that—have you not been provided three rounds of documents that have been requested?

Mr. MARSHALL. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kansas.

Mr. MARSHALL. Unfortunately, the documents were not what we asked for. They are incomplete. They don't give us what we are looking for. But we would welcome the opportunity to sit down with the chairman and try to address—

Mr. MENENDEZ. Through the Presiding Officer, has my colleague not

been offered a briefing by USAID to try to answer the rest of his questions?

This is an extraordinary amount of information being offered for someone who is not even a member of the Foreign Relations Committee. But, nonetheless, in order to accommodate him, we want to get to a point that he feels comfortable to do so. Have you not been offered a briefing, which you have not yet accepted?

Mr. MARSHALL. Not that I am aware of.

Mr. MENENDEZ. Well, my understanding is that there has been, Mr. President, an offer of a briefing made to the Senator.

And, by the way, this has nothing to do with Dr. Muyangwa. She has nothing to do with any of this. She is nominated to be the Assistant Administrator for Africa, nothing to do with China, nothing to do with Wuhan, nothing to do with anything else.

I would urge my colleague, if you have all this information about illicit activities, please bring it forward. The committee would like to consider it. But I haven't seen any of it. It is time to put up or shut up.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read the nomination of Marcia Stephens Bloom Bernicat, of New Jersey, a Career Member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of the Minister-Counselor, to be Director General of the Foreign Service.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Jersey.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from South Dakota.

ROBB ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SHOOTING

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, before I begin, I want to express my sorrow at the terrible shooting in Texas on Tuesday that claimed the lives of 2 teachers and 19 schoolchildren.

Like a lot of Americans, I cannot imagine the anguish these children's parents are facing right now as they grieve for sons and daughters whom they will never again drive to school or welcome home at the end of the day.

I pray that the Lord will be with them in their suffering and that they will receive the comfort and strength that they need.

My prayers are with the entire Uvalde community—the families of those killed, the injured, the teachers, and students who suffered such terror, the medical and law enforcement personnel who responded, and all those reeling from this terrible attack.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Mr. President, this past weekend, I headed to Murdo, SD, the small town of around 500 people where I grew up.

Needless to say, any trip to Murdo brings back a lot of memories. First and foremost are those memories of my parents Pat and Harold Thune and of growing up with my three brothers and sister.

We were lucky kids to have my parents. My mom was a wonderful, loving, eternally optimistic mother who spent most of my growing up years as our school librarian. She was responsible for making sure that we Thune kids got some culture, whether we wanted it or not. She was the one who made sure we got an introduction to music and learned how to play the piano. With her encouragement, I even joined the swing choir—although I will spare you, Mr. President, from any recitals.

In the summer, she would make us come inside for an hour every day to read. I didn't always want to come inside on those beautiful summer days. At the time, I would have much preferred to keep shooting hoops with the basket my dad had attached to a pole in our backyard. But today I am grateful for every minute that she made us spend with books.

My dad, he was our hero—a division I basketball player, a World War II combat pilot. He was a teacher at my high school. And a coach. And the athletic director. Oh, and also the bus driver.

So between him and my mom as the librarian, we Thune kids were practically never away from our parents' watchful eyes. I am so grateful to have had my dad's coaching in sports and in life. My dad taught us, as players, to play as a team. He didn't like ball hogs or people who were in the game for the personal glory. He believed your job as a member of a team was to make the people around you better. If somebody else was in a better position to take the shot, you always made the extra pass. You didn't try to pad your own statistics. You played for the good of the team.

It is an attitude I have tried to carry with me throughout my life. My parents gave us Thune kids a strong set of values and an inheritance of faith. In good times and bad, faith was their anchor and the Holy Scriptures, their roadmap. And I am grateful that they taught us who to turn to in times of trouble.

Mr. President, being in Murdo reminded me of my parents, as it always does. It also made me reflect on just how lucky I was to grow up in a small town—and small-town South Dakota in particular. It is true that growing up in a small town meant that my parents had heard all about any of the Thune kids' misdemeanors before we even made it home.

But even with that little drawback, small-town life was wonderful. In Murdo, you know everyone, and everyone knows you. And that gave us a sense of community and belonging that we carry to this day. Growing up in Murdo also taught us just how much we are all connected.

Mr. President, South Dakotans are independent people, but we also rely on